## GOING FORTH OF VILDIDUS

By Doris Redfern

HALF-WAY up a steep hill, on the n outskirts of the village, was an old house that once had been a an old house that once had been a model of neatness, and many voices were within its walls. Now, alas! there was only one voice; and the old house seldom heard it, unless, tiring of silence and solitude, Vildidus Haws talked to himself; for he, a bachelor of forty-five, lived in the big farm-house alone.

Never in his life had he been outside of the village, never seen a steamboat, the trolley, or even a railroad, but he had dreamed of all these things. Some day, he mused, he would go down to day, he mused, he would go down to the city and see if all the wonderful tales were true. When he returned he would marry Libony Crouch and—he hardly dared whisper this to himself—perhaps the old house would ring once more with laughter and the sound of little feet. He had been "sweet on" Libony Crouch for nearly twenty years; but he was shy, and she was shyer, and she objected to every she was shyer, and she objected to every-thing about the old Haws place. "You hev" to go uphill or downhill

every time you step outdoors." she grumbled. "I like level travelin' myself. Don't care if the view is fine—there's no runnin' water in the house. Every drop has to be brought uphill from the spring a quarter of a mile below. Old Grandma Haws used to hey to do all the water luggin herself. an' they say she has brought as many as twenty bucketsful in a day. Dide says twenty bucketsful in a day. Dide says of course he would bring it all; but you can't never tell.

'An' then, mother, there's those fits that Dide is always havin'. I've always felt," in a hoarse whisper, "that he would be sure to hev' one durin' the marriage common!"

ceremony! Bosh! He wouldn't nuther!" old woman would exclaim irritably. She had begun to wonder if she should live

to see her daughter married.

It really was Vildidus fits that kept
Libony single. From childhood he had
been subject to them. The least excitement seemed to bring them on. The
blood would rush to his head, he would begin to tremble, and in a few seconds would be asleep apparently. At the end of at, hour or so, he would return to consciousness and take up the conversation just where he left it, sometimes in
the middle of a word. He was rather
sensitive in regard to his weakness, and
Libony was more so. It really was the
fits that kept them apart. He always
had them at the most inopportune times
—when anything frightened or confused
him, if he went to an "inspired" prayermeeting, always, if he went to a funeral,
he was sure to have a fit. So it was no
wonder that Libony Crouch expected
one to happen at the wedding.

One morning in the early fall Vildidus
drove through the village with a load of
grain. There was a change in the place
since he was there last—an enormous
poster was stuck up in the window of
the post-office. "Grand Excursion to
Boston, Round-trip Tickets, \$2, Good consciousness and take up the conversa-

the post-office. Grand Excursion to Boston. Round-trip Tickets, Sz. Good for Ten Days," he read. Here was his chance to see the world. He would go! His father had never been "down coun-try"—he would be a greater man than his father! On his way home, he had to pass Libony Crouch's house. Old Mes. rough sat on the door-step half-asleep as

he drove up.
"Libony to home?" he called, with a

"Libony to home?" he called, with a new note of authority in his voice. When she came, he looked at her gravely. "Libony," he said, "I'm goin' away to-morrow. I want your answer one way or the other 'fore I go. Now is it 'yes,' or shall I bring back a wife from down country?" country?

Libony gasped again, "You—you wouldn't!" she exclaimed, "Yes, I would tuther!" said Vildidus

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obstinately. "The house needs a mis-tress, an it's goin' to hev' it. It'll be somebody else if it ham't goin' to be you, but it's got to be somebody dum quick!"

Miss Crouch, who never before had heard such strong language from her intended, stared in open-mouthed horror, as he clucked to his horses.

"You've got to say quick!" he called, as they started into a brisk trot. Libony

waited until the last minute, then nodded her head violently and fled to the house, like the coy maiden of forty-two she

Vildidus arrived at the station, which was eighteen nules from his home, just two hours before the train was due. He had his carpet-bag with him—the first time it had seen the light since the days of his grandfather. It was not filled with clothes, however, for Vilhidus had only one "best suit," and he was wearing that. For the sake of economy, he had that. For the sake of economy, he had decided to carry his food with him, and "set around somewhere nights" so there would be no hotel bills. So the old carpet-bag was stuffed with all the catables the farm afforded, and its owner left home with an easy mind.

When he purchased his ticket he felt as if he was doing something strange and awful. When at last the train pulled into the station, he was so awed by the sight that he stood still with openmenthed astonishment.

"Hey, mister! That's your train— the hay-seed train. Hurry up or you'll get left!" shouted a boy on the plat-

With fear and trembling Vildidus Haws went up the steps. He stumbled into the first vacant seat, took his enormous carpet-bag in his lap, grabbed his hat with one hand, while clutching the arm of the seat with the other, and held his breath. He was more than surprised to feel the train move along slowly and easily, with little jolt or jar. Some of his fellow-townsmen, who had traveled before, offered to put his carpet-bag in the rack or in a safe place on the floor; but Vildidus refused to have it moved, and showed planly that he did not care to talk, and he soon was left alone with his thoughts. He had a list of places that he wanted to visit, and he took it out and wondered where he should go first.

"Boston Common," he murmured to mself. "There ought to be some good himself. dace there where I could eat my victuals. Probably there'll be some honest man Probably there is be some non-round there who would take care of my round there who would take care of my valise while I go to see the sights. I don't want to lug it, if I can help it, it's

so blamed heavy."

When the train steamed into the North Union Station, Vildidus never had imagined such a crowd or such a noise. Only the fear of losing his value kept him from shutting his eyes and putting his fingers in his ears. His fellow-travelers hurried past and left him far behind, trying to take it all in. Outside

such a heavy that he besitated about asking. He stared along for two blocks and then went into a store to inquire.

Ten days later Vildidus Haws was guided by an officer of the law to his train at the North Union Station. He appeared thin and pale, and his hands twitched nervously. He had no value. When the train began to move he seemed happy. "Wal. Dide, hev' a good time?" called an old farmer, slapping him on

Haws' answer Have answer was exceive; so were his answers to all other questions. No one could get a word out of him in reterrible to his trip—not level labelity trough. As seen as he arrived she began to search for information.

"What I wer think of the elecator radioad?" she began. She had a great

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